

Grade Six

United States History: 1877 to the Present

The standards for grade six relate to the history of the United States from the end of the Reconstruction period to the present day, thus completing a two-year study of American history in the elementary grades. Sixth graders should continue to learn fundamental concepts in civics, economics, and geography in the context of United States history. Teachers are encouraged to use simulations, class debates, projects, or other innovative techniques to make the students' learning experiences lively and memorable. Students should have ample instruction devoted to reviewing and strengthening map and globe skills, skills in interpreting and using information, and historical thinking skills.

- 6.1 The student will explain how, following the Civil War, massive immigration, combined with the rise of big business, heavy industry, and mechanized farming transformed American life, with emphasis on
 - Western settlement and changing federal policy toward the Indians;
 - why various immigrant groups came to America, some of the obstacles they faced, and the important contributions they made; and
 - the growth of American cities, including the impact of racial and ethnic conflict and the role of political machines.
- 6.2 The student will analyze and explain Americans' responses to industrialization and urbanization, with emphasis on
 - muckraking literature and the rise of the Progressive Movement;
 - women's suffrage and temperance movements, and their impact on society;
 - child labor, working conditions, and the rise of organized labor;
 - political changes at the local, state, and national levels; and
 - improvements in standards of living, life expectancy, and living conditions.
- 6.3 The student will describe and analyze the changing role of the United States in world affairs between 1898 and 1930, with emphasis on
 - the Spanish-American War;
 - the Panama Canal;
 - Theodore Roosevelt's "Big Stick Diplomacy;"
 - the United States' role in World War I;
 - the League of Nations; and
 - tariff barriers to world trade.
- 6.4 The student will describe the ideas and events of the 1920's and 1930's, with emphasis on
 - music, dance, and entertainment
 - the Harlem Renaissance;
 - impact of the automobile;
 - prohibition, speakeasies, and bootlegging;
 - the impact of women's suffrage;
 - racial tensions and labor strife; and
 - urban and rural electrification.
- 6.5 The student will explain the Great Depression and its effects, with emphasis on
 - weaknesses in the economy, the collapse of financial markets in the late 1920's, and other events that triggered the Great Crash;
 - the extent and depth of business failures, unemployment, and poverty;
 - the New Deal and its impact on the Depression and the future role of government in the economy; and
 - personalities and leaders of the period, including Will Rogers, Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt, and Charles Lindbergh.
- 6.6 The student will analyze and explain the major causes, events, personalities, and effects of World War II, with emphasis on
 - the rise of Fascism, Nazism, and Communism in the 1930's and 1940's and the response of Europe and the United States;
 - aggression in Europe and the Pacific;
 - failure of the policy of appeasement;
 - the Holocaust;
 - major battles of World War II and the reasons for Allied victory; and
 - major changes in Eastern Europe, China, Southeast Asia, and Africa following the war.
- 6.7 The student will describe the economic, social, and political transformation of the United States since World War II, with emphasis on
 - segregation, desegregation, and the Civil Rights

- Movement;
 - the changing role of women in America;
 - the technology revolution and its impact on communication, transportation, and new industries;
 - the consumer economy and increasing global markets;
 - increases in violent crime and illegal drugs;
 - effects of increased immigration;
 - the impact of governmental social and economic programs and the Cold War on the growth of federal income tax revenues and government spending and the role of the Federal Reserve System;
 - effects of organized religious activism; and
 - political leaders of the period, trends in national elections, and differences between the two major political parties.
- 6.8 The student will describe United States foreign policy since World War II, with emphasis on
 - the Cold War and the policy of communist containment;
 - confrontations with the Soviet Union in Berlin and Cuba;
 - nuclear weapons and the arms race;
 - McCarthyism and the fear of communist influence within the United States;
 - NATO and other alliances, and our role in the United Nations;
 - military conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East; and
 - the collapse of communism in Europe and the rise of new challenges.
- 6.9 The student will interpret patriotic slogans and excerpts from notable speeches in United States history since 1877 including “Ask not what your country can do for you, . . .” “ . . . December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy,” “I have a dream . . .,” and “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”
- 6.10 The student will develop skills for historical analysis, including the ability to
 - identify, analyze, and interpret primary sources (artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, art, documents, and newspapers) and contemporary media (computer information systems) and to make generalizations about events and life in United States history since 1877;
 - recognize and explain how different points of view have been influenced by nationalism, race, religion, and ethnicity;
- distinguish fact from fiction by examining documentary sources;
 - construct various time lines of United States history since 1877 including landmark dates, technological and economic changes, social movements, military conflicts, and presidential elections; and
 - locate on a United States map all 50 states, the original 13 states, the states that formed the Confederacy, and the states which entered the Union since 1877.
- 6.11 The student will develop skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing by evaluating different assessments of the causes, costs, and benefits of major events in recent American history such as World War I, the New Deal, World War II, the Korean War, the Conservative Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the War on Poverty, and the Vietnam War.